Appl. No.: 10/688,505
Amdt. dated 03/23/2006
Reply to Office action of January 24, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving prescription information identifying a requested medical item;

creating a substitution reference list in response to said prescription information, said substitution reference list identifying at least one of said requested medical item **or** ~~and~~ an equivalent medical item; ~~and~~

automatically applying substitution rules in a database to said substitution reference list to select a medical item from said substitution reference list; and

automatically outputting dispensing information related to **the** [[a]] selected medical item on said substitution reference list ~~in response to the application of substitution rules in a database.~~

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said creating a substitution reference list includes determining whether an equivalent medical item may be dispensed in place of said requested medical item.

3.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said creating a substitution reference list includes comparing said received prescription information to substitution rules provided by one of a prescribing physician, an insurance provider, a government agency, Medicare, Medicaid, a customer, **or** ~~and~~ a pharmacist.

4.   (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving prescription information;

automatically applying substitution rules from a database to said received information; and

automatically outputting dispensing information related to a ~~selected~~ medical item **selected** based on the application of said substitution rules.

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5.   (Currently Amended) The method of either claim 1 or claim 4 wherein said substitution rules include rules based on at least one of dispensing system hardware configuration, drug availability, drug expiration date, cost, pharmacy profit potential, inventory management, workflow efficiencies, pharmaceutical considerations, or and customer preferences.

6.   (Original) The method of either claim 1 or claim 4 additionally comprising dispensing in response to said dispensing information.

7.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 wherein said dispensing includes one of automatically dispensing or and manually dispensing.

8.   (Original) The method of claim 6 additionally comprising verifying that said selected medical item has been correctly dispensed.

9.   (Original) The method of claim 6 additionally comprising generating an alert when an equivalent medical item is dispensed.

10.   (Original) The method of claim 6 further comprising saving data responsive to said dispensing.

11.   (Original) The method of claim 6 additionally comprising manually entering a request to dispense an equivalent medical item and generating an alert if said manually entered request is determined to be nonequivalent.

12.   (Original) The method of claim 6 additionally comprising printing a prescription label based on said dispensing.

13.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 additionally comprising updating an inventory level in response to said dispensing.

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14.　(Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 additionally comprising printing medical item attributes in response to said dispensing.

15.　(Original) The method of either claim 1 or claim 4 additionally comprising generating an alert if a requested medical item or an equivalent medical item are unavailable.

16.　(Original) A method for manually filling a prescription, comprising:

receiving prescription information identifying a requested drug;

automatically applying substitution rules from a database to said received information;

automatically outputting stock location information based on the application of said substitution rules;

retrieving a stock bottle based on said stock location information; and

dispensing from said retrieved stock bottle.

17.　(Currently Amended) The method of claim 16 wherein said substitution rules include rules based on at least one of dispensing system hardware configuration, drug availability, drug expiration date, cost, pharmacy profit potential, inventory management, workflow efficiencies, pharmaceutical considerations, **or** ~~and~~ customer preferences.

18.　(Original) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising verifying that the correct stock bottle has been retrieved.

19.　(Original) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising generating an alert when an equivalent drug is dispensed.

20.　(Original) The method of claim 16 further comprising saving data responsive to said dispensing.

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21. (Original) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising manually entering a request to dispense an equivalent drug and generating an alert if said manually entered drug is determined to be nonequivalent.

22. (Original) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising printing a prescription vial label based on said dispensing.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising updating an inventory level in response to said dispensing.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising printing drug attributes in response to said dispensing.

25. (Original) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising generating an alert if said requested drug or an equivalent drug is unavailable.

26. (Original) The method of claim 16 additionally comprising creating a substitution reference list based on said received information, and wherein said automatically applying automatically applies said substitution rules to said substitution reference list to select one of said drugs identified on said substitution reference list.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein said creating a substitution reference list includes determining whether an equivalent drug may be dispensed in place of said requested drug.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26 wherein said creating a substitution reference list includes comparing said received prescription information to substitution rules provided by one of a prescribing physician, an insurance provider, a government agency, Medicare, Medicaid, a customer, or and a pharmacist.

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29. (Original) The method of claim 26 additionally comprising generating an alert if none of the drugs on said substitution reference list are available.

30. (Original) A method for automatically filling a prescription, comprising:

receiving prescription information identifying a requested drug;

automatically applying substitution rules from a database to said received information;

automatically outputting information to an automated dispensing device based on the application of said substitution rules; and

automatically dispensing in response to said output information.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30 wherein said substitution rules include rules based on at least one of dispensing system hardware configuration, drug availability, drug expiration date, cost, pharmacy profit potential, inventory management, workflow efficiencies, pharmaceutical considerations, **or** ~~and~~ customer preferences.

32. (Original) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising verifying that a drug has been correctly dispensed.

33. (Original) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising generating an alert when an equivalent drug is dispensed.

34. (Original) The method of claim 30 further comprising saving data responsive to said dispensing.

35. (Original) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising manually entering a request to dispense an equivalent drug and generating an alert if said manually entered drug is determined to be nonequivalent.

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36.   (Original) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising printing a prescription vial label based on said dispensing.

37.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising updating an inventory level in response to said dispensing.

38.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising printing drug attributes in response to said dispensing.

39.   (Original) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising generating an alert if said requested drug or an equivalent drug is unavailable.

40.   (Original) The method of claim 30 additionally comprising creating a substitution reference list based on said received information, and wherein said automatically applying automatically applies said substitution rules to said substitution reference list to select one of said drugs identified on said substitution reference list.

41.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40 wherein said creating a substitution reference list includes determining whether an equivalent drug may be dispensed in place of said requested drug.

42.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 41 wherein said creating a substitution reference list includes comparing said received prescription information to substitution rules provided by one of a prescribing physician, an insurance provider, a government agency, Medicare, Medicaid, a customer, or and a pharmacist.

43.   (Original) The method of claim 41 additionally comprising generating an alert if none of the drugs on said substitution reference list is available.

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